



# Rebuilding Afghanistan

Weekly Activity Update for April 28 – May 4

Issue 56

United States Agency for International Development

## STRENGTHENING THE GOVERNMENT

### Program Goals

- Support the Bonn process: the Constitutional, Human Rights, and Judicial Commissions; the 2004 elections; and a free and independent media.
- Strengthen government budgeting, revenue generation (e.g., customs), monetary management, private-sector related legal and regulatory frameworks, and promote private enterprises.
- Build capacity to carry out other legitimate government functions and support reconstruction of health, judicial, education, economic, agricultural and transportation infrastructure.

### Recent Progress:

- **Political Parties in Afghanistan:** As part of USAID's work to support the Bonn process including a free and fair national election, now scheduled for September 2004, USAID co-hosted a conference on the role of political parties in Afghan democracy on April 17<sup>th</sup>. Over 400 delegates from political parties across Afghanistan's political spectrum attended. Keynote speakers from Afghan ministries, UNAMA, and the US Embassy spoke and panels were convened where delegates discussed their role in building democracy and international officials outlined the voter registration and election process.



Delegates to the political party conference on April 17<sup>th</sup> listen to the keynote speeches.

## REVITALIZING AGRICULTURE/CREATING JOBS

### Program Goals

- Increased marketable output of \$250 million in agriculture
- More than 500,000 farm family beneficiaries
- A reliable source of water provided to more than 500,000 hectares of land through irrigation rehabilitation
- 1,000 km of improved village feeder roads rehabilitated.
- Construction of over 100 agricultural market centers.

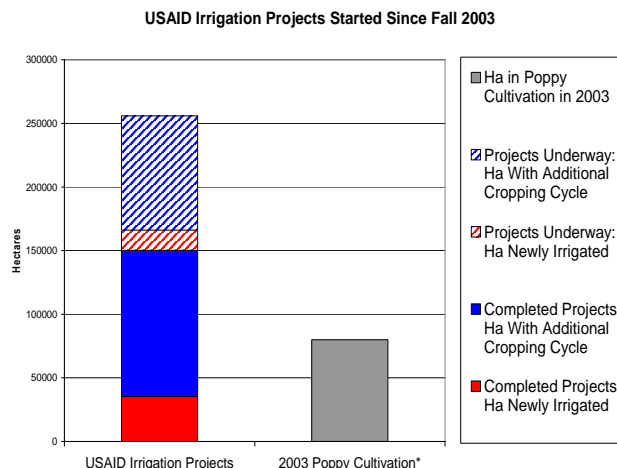
### Recent Progress

USAID's Rebuilding Agricultural Markets Program (RAMP) is a three-year program aimed at enhancing the food security and incomes of Afghanistan's rural population. It has two principal objectives, to increase agricultural productivity and output, and to facilitate effective linkages between producers, processors and markets. The program's budget is \$153 million.

- **Irrigation Projects Having A Major Impact:** In fall 2003 and spring 2004, USAID initiated 21 irrigation projects serving a total area of 255,000 hectares (ha). The projects increase production on this land through either (a) increasing water flow to land that is currently irrigated, thus permitting an additional cropping cycle, or (b) providing water to land that was previously not irrigated. Currently 11 of those projects are complete (serving 150,000 ha) and the remaining projects will be completed during 2004. These projects are a key investment in the revitalization of Afghan agriculture: for every dollar invested in these irrigation projects the expected benefit from increased production is \$14.68. *(continued in next column)*

### Recent Progress (continued):

- **Irrigation Projects (continued):** Irrigation projects can also play a key role in providing Afghan farmers with alternatives to poppy cultivation. Irrigated land permits farmers to cultivate higher value cash crops than on non-irrigated land.



Comparison of recent USAID irrigation project results with poppy cultivation in 2003. \* Poppy cultivation data from United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2003*.

## REVITALIZING AGRICULTURE/CREATING JOBS

### Recent Progress (continued)

- **Rehabilitating Farm-to-Market Roads:** USAID is rehabilitating portions of Afghanistan's major Ring Road, such as the Kabul-Kandahar Highway, and hundreds of kilometers of secondary road, which generally connect provincial capitals to national roads. Less well known is USAID's work on farm-to-market roads, which connect districts (county-sized areas in Afghanistan) to other districts. The Senjid Dara road is one such road which has just been completed. This road connects the Senjid Dara village area to a main highway which permits travel to major markets in Kabul and Charikar. The improved road cuts transportation time in half and improves market access for the 2,000 farmers living in the area.



*In the course of the Senjid Dara road project, ten Afghan engineers were trained in quality engineering standards for gravel road construction. With proper construction, the roads will last for 6 years with little or no maintenance.*

## INCREASING ACCESS TO BASIC HEALTH CARE

### Program Goals

- 400 health centers renovated or constructed in rural areas, providing services to an estimated 12 million people.
- 11 million beneficiaries assured improved access to basic services in 13 provinces; 4.4 million women and children given access to services through USAID's health care initiative grants.
- 3,400 new community health workers, 990 midwives, and 6,000 clinic staff trained.
- Make safe water systems, contraceptives, mosquito nets and other health products available at reasonable prices using existing trading and marketing systems.
- Strengthen MOH capacity at the national and provincial levels for making effective health care policy; develop a public health education program; determine a sustainable health finance policy; strengthen human resource development; improve hospital management; and expand and improve the HMIS.

### Recent Progress:

The USAID-funded REACH (Rural Expansion of Afghanistan's Community-Based Healthcare) program aims to improve the health of women of reproductive age and children under 5 years of age through increased use of basic health services in rural areas.

- **Doubling the Number of Trained Midwives in Afghanistan:** On April 17<sup>th</sup>, USAID announced a \$3.3 million program to advance midwifery training in four of Afghanistan's most heavily populated provinces. The training responds to a maternal care crisis in Afghanistan, which has the second highest maternal mortality rate in the world. Currently, it is estimated that there are only 470 trained midwives in Afghanistan and that approximately 50% of Afghan women receive no prenatal care. This program will provide improved training for at least 700 midwives over the next two years. The training will take place at the campuses of the Institute for Health Sciences in Nangarhar, Kabul, Balkh, and Herat provinces.
- **Promoting Safe Water Systems:** USAID, in conjunction with the Center for Disease Control and the Gates Foundation, initiated a program for a safe water system that includes a social marketing initiative to promote the use and sale of Clorin—a chlorine solution that sanitizes drinking water. To date, over 50,000 bottles have been sold.

### Recent Progress (continued):



*The Afghan Minister of Health, US Ambassador, and a USAID Health Officer sign agreements to start a midwifery training program which will more than double the number of trained midwives in Afghanistan.*



*One 250 ml bottle of Clorin serves a family of six for 4-6 weeks..*